



The BSE, IQIPS and UKAS: joint statement

Background

Both the British Society of Echocardiography (BSE) Departmental Accreditation process and the Improving Quality in Physiological diagnostic Services (IQIPS) programme share the common aim of improving the quality of services offered to patients by assessing them against professionally devised standards. The BSE programme is administered by the BSE Departmental Accreditation Committee and the IQIPS programme is hosted by the Royal College of Physicians (RCP). The RCP has contracted the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS) to administer the IQIPS accreditation process.

The BSE Departmental Accreditation process has existed since 2004 and is confined solely to the provision of echocardiography services. Historically other areas of cardiac physiology have not been served by similar accreditation programmes. The IQIPS programme was launched more recently in 2012 and includes all aspects of cardiac physiological diagnostics.

Collaboration and processes

The BSE and IQIPS teams have worked closely to ensure parity between the clinical standards for echocardiography within the two processes. The similarities are such that joint BSE/UKAS inspection visits will be possible by experienced echocardiographers trained in both assessment processes. The clinical standards for echocardiography will be the same in the IQIPS programme as those in the BSE Departmental Accreditation process. If a department elects to apply for IQIPS accreditation with echocardiography as part of their scope of practice they will also be able to receive BSE Departmental Accreditation ('dual accreditation') if they meet the required standards, however, will still need to fill in the BSE DA application forms to achieve this. If a department applies for BSE Departmental Accreditation via the BSE process, they will be awarded BSE but not IQIPS Accreditation.

Choosing the most suitable accreditation Departments applying for IQIPS accreditation will have to demonstrate that they reach the appropriate standard in all of the cardiac physiology services they provide, whereas BSE Departmental Accreditation will examine only the echocardiography service. The funding arrangements of the two accreditation processes reflect their significantly different breadth and frequency of assessment and potential applicants are advised to consult both websites for up to date information about fees.

Joint declaration

Both the BSE Departmental Accreditation Committee and IQIPS programme support the accreditation of all cardiac physiological diagnostic services. In this time of transition organisations need to consider which of the schemes best meets their immediate and long-term requirements. Specialist area accreditation may have a role for certain services or as part of a phased progression towards accreditation across all areas of service provision

Websites:

BSE Departmental Accreditation: <https://bsecho.org/departmental>

IQIPS: <https://www.iqips.org.uk/>

UKAS: <http://www.ukas.com/>